

BAP
M678

Library of the Theological Seminary,
PRINCETON, N. J.

Presented by Mr. Samuel Agnew of Philadelphia, Pa.

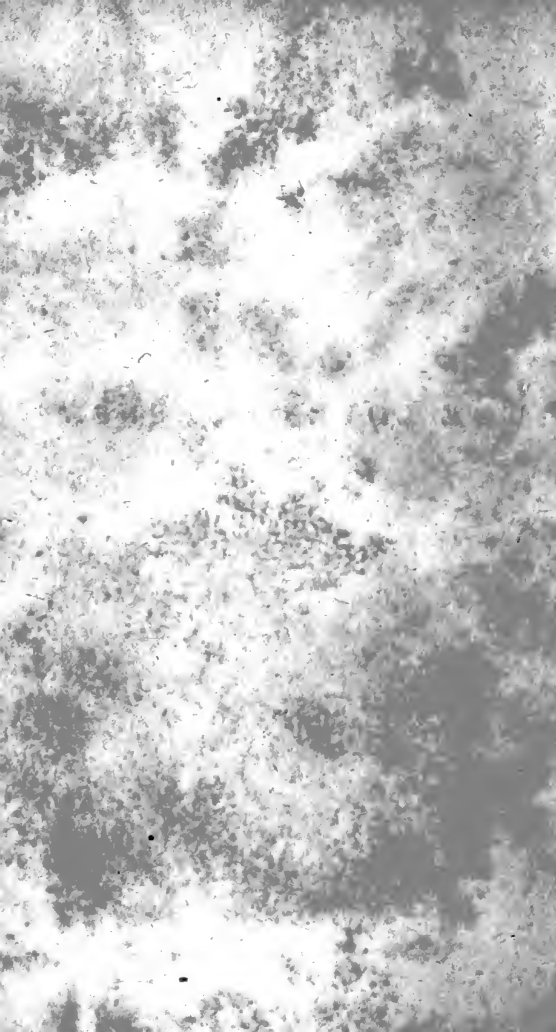
Agnew Coll. on Baptism, No.

SCB

10155



THE LOVE OF JESUS.



THE LOVE OF JESUS.

A

TREATISE

UPON

BAPTISM, CONFIRMATION,

AND THE

LORD'S SUPPER.

FROM THE GERMAN OF

F. E. MISCA.

TRANSLATED BY

REV. A. W. M'CLURE,

Pastor of the Trinitarian Congregational Church in Malden, Ms.

ANDOVER:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR.

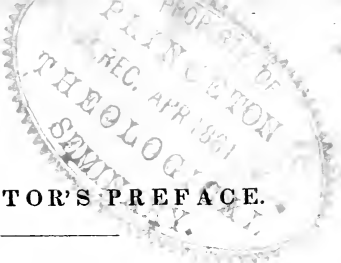
1836.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1836, by
F. E. MISCA,
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of Massachusetts.





Abraham offering up Isaac.



TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

THIS little book was written by a female who has consecrated her soul and body, and all the living that she hath, to the cause of her Redeemer. It is one of her personal efforts for the spiritual good of our German population, especially that portion of it which inhabits the mountains of Western Pennsylvania. To their improvement she has devoted years of toil, and all her pecuniary means. For them she has sought the benevolent aid of the Christian public, in weary pilgrimages of solicitation. And now she appears to be about to see the particular object of her exertions accomplished, in securing to them, in the region of her residence, the preached Gospel and the establishment of schools.

In accordance with the wishes of her friends, and in hopes that its sale and circulation will promote this great business of her life, as all its proceeds will be devoted to it, this translation of her treatise is given to the public. Special reasons have constrained the Translator to make *this* version more literal than he could have wished ; but

still he confidently expects that it will be read with some pleasure, and greater profit. From it may be seen the character of that religion which the Author desires to inculcate among the immigrant population,—a religion eminently conservative, and expressly adapted by its Founder, to maintaining peaceful and well ordered communities, as well as to the redemption of sinful beings. In the course of his duty, the Translator thinks he has seen the main-spring of all the self-denials and self-sacrifices of its writer, in the spiritual and deep experience of the ‘love of Jesus,’ which is developed and enforced in this treatise.

It may not be needless to say, that *Confirmation* is a rite practised by the Lutheran, and many other churches, and intended for the completion of baptism. It is an assumption of the obligations implied in the baptismal vow, and entered into by the parents or sponsors in behalf of the subject of it. In the Lutheran church it is administered with great solemnity, and only after a certain course of Christian instruction, and a public and audible affirmation of the great doctrines and duties of religion. It is initiatory to Church communion, and is equivalent to a profession of religion among the Presbyterians and Congregationalists of America.

A. W. M'CLURE.

Malden, Mass. June 2, 1836.

DEDICATION.

To the HON. SAMUEL T. ARMSTRONG, Mayor of the city of Boston, and to her benevolent friends in Massachusetts and New York, this translation is dedicated by the grateful

AUTHOR.





THE LOVE OF JESUS.

PART FIRST.

BAPTISM AND CONFIRMATION.

EPHESIANS 5.: 25—27.

Even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

HEARKEN, my beloved! Jesus desires a holy, pure, unspotted, unblemished church. Mark it well! — Why it is that I wish and beseech you to mark it well on the day of your confirmation, you may easily understand; for you know that you are entering a church of Christians, you are received as members of a Christian church. You ought, therefore, first of all, to understand what a Christian church should be.

You take your name from Christ. He, the purest, the holiest, who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth, — he is the Lord of the church. He is the Head, under whom the members are all united by one Spirit to one body. He has founded and established the church. He has dearly purchased every member for his own, by sufferings such as no man before or since has endured, by humiliation unto death, even to death on the cross. He so loved the church, that he gave himself for it. It is his ordinance and command, that in all the earth, men, without distinction of people, or other outward circumstances, shall be called and invited to assemble and unite themselves under him, the Lord and Head of mankind. From him is the doctrine in which you are to be instructed, and which, according to his will, shall be taught in all the world. Of him the gospel testifies, which is preached to the church, and which, according to his will, shall be preached to the nations of the earth. That he came into the world to make sinners happy; that he died in order to save sinners from the misery, and ruin, and death of sin;

that God raised him from the dead, and exalted him to be Lord and King at his right hand; that he there lives and reigns, endowed with all that is needed to lift up fallen, sunken humanity, to raise it from its low estate, and elevate it to his own greatness and glory, till all his enemies shall be humbled beneath his feet; — *this* is the sum and substance of the gospel which he wished to have proclaimed. And because these glad tidings are its summary, it bears the name of *gospel*. ‘Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.’ Believe on the Lord Jesus, ‘and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins.’ This is the sum and substance of the call, the invitation to the church of Christ. You hear that that proclamation is universal, that this invitation is universal. But not all who heard that proclamation, and understood this invitation, accepted the gospel, and followed the call.

The men who knew, and had often and painfully felt their blindness and perverseness, their impurity and debasement and exposure

to punishment, their imperfection, weakness, and need of help ; or those whose eyes the gospel had opened to these things, who had been led to wish and long for something better ; or those in whom this wish, this longing had been just awakened, and was really lively and strong, to them this gospel was truly what its name imports, glad tidings ; to them it was a precious, invaluable word, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. Such men, as you may well suppose, heard this new doctrine gladly ; they willingly followed such an invitation ; they embraced such a gospel with joy.

Now those who received the gospel, came and were baptized. By baptism they were consecrated to Christ, and received into the church of Jesus. Such was the will and commandment of Jesus. ‘Go ye,’ said he to those who should testify of him, ‘and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.’ Whoever, therefore, came to be immersed in the water, or washed with it, it was the same as if he had said in express terms, ‘I am un-

clean, and wish to be cleansed from that which defiles me.' And when he was baptized in the name of Jesus, it was as if Jesus himself had spoken to him, and assured him, 'If thou dost earnestly desire it, see, — thou art purified and made holy!' Jesus had commanded that men should be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Let any one be so baptized, and it is as if he had expressly said in words, 'Dear Father, I would be thy child, I would have thee to be my Father. Let me be thy child. Be thou my Father. I will follow and obey thee as a child. Jesus! I acknowledge and believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. As such will I accept thee, as such will I follow thee. Through thee only can I and will I come to the Father. Purify and free me from all that prevents my coming to him. Take away all that separates and removes me from God. Grant me the Spirit, through which I can and ever shall be made wise, and pure, and better, and more steadfast, patient, courageous and confiding. Sanctify

me, that I may become one with thee, and through thee with the Father.'

And whoever, then, was baptized, according to the command of Jesus, in the name of the Father, Son and Spirit, could feel as if Jesus himself had spoken to him and assured him, 'Yes, if it be truly thy mind, and wish, and will, then is my Father thy Father also; then art thou his child and heir, and joint heir with me; then there is nothing to prevent thy communion with the Father; then I am thine; for thee was my death; for thee is my life. My Spirit is thy Spirit. My glory shall be thy glory also.'

Baptism, then, appears to us as certainly a very important and significant action. It indicates and embraces what is essential and distinguishing to Christianity. Desirable and acceptable, important and great is that which is offered, indicated, and confirmed, by him in whose name baptism is administered. And how extremely simple and easy is the manner and terms of participation; Come—desire to have—receive; that is all which is to be done. It may well be supposed, that if in the baptism

of those who by that means entered the church of Jesus, all was as it should be, according to the mind and will of Jesus; that if they came to baptism with such intentions and desires, and received such high assurances in so easy and simple a manner, then must their condition be greatly changed and improved from what it was before. Then, indeed, all that might be done according to the mind and will of Jesus, would be done with a better mind and from a purer heart; then would every thing be more purely and truly good, because the fountain from whence it springs, the heart, would be refined and sanctified by love. Christ gave himself for me! This remains before the eyes of the baptized; this brings his baptism home to his heart. And where the heart is filled with this thought, and the whole man is penetrated by it, then, according to the nature of things, and the nature of the heart, he is made holy. Then he cleaves to Jesus, and takes part with him. He feels himself to be Christ's own, and consecrated to him. He belongs no more to himself; he belongs to Christ, and lives for him. And thus the bap-

tized is in spirit and in truth a member of the body of which Jesus is the Head, a true and genuine member of his church.

Still, however, this is not given, wrought and imparted by the outward ceremony,—the baptism with water. The outward act cannot purify inwardly, cannot sanctify the heart. The water-baptism cannot give purity to the mind and integrity to the life. It was formerly, as at present, only an emblem, a sign, a pledge, a seal. It had then, no more than at present, any peculiar secret power. Alas ! it was not long before many were baptized who were not on that account members of the church of Christ ; just as now many are baptized and are confirmed in their baptismal covenant, who are not, on that account, Christians, or members of the church of Christ. That does not depend on the outward ceremony, but only and alone on the mind, and will, and faith of those who submit themselves to this outward rite. ‘In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything (which likewise was a sign and seal of grace and promise,) nor uncircum-

cision ;' nor baptism either, without the faith which worketh by love.

But the fact that Jesus himself ordained such a rite, expressive of purification, for all who would declare themselves for him, and cleave to him, tells us loudly and forcibly enough what members ought to distinguish his church, and what is aimed at by these members of his church on earth. Bathing with water purifies ! It reminds us of purification ; the water alludes to sanctification, by which we must be born again for his kingdom ; and that other baptism, which is to follow, and which is called in the holy Scriptures, 'the baptism of fire, and the baptism of the Spirit,' aims at purification and leads to sanctification. We must be born again, transformed and created anew by the water and the Spirit ; we must believe in the Holy Ghost, in a holy, universal, christian church, and in the communion of saints.

A holy christian church ! Holy is the Father who hath called us to be his children ; and as he who hath called us is holy, so must we be holy in all manner of conversation ; be-

cause it is written : Be ye holy, for I am holy. And this is the message which we have heard of him, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. Such an high-priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. In this high-priest we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous ; and he is the propitiation for our sins ; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. So he writes to us, who wrote that we might not sin ; and he adds : And hereby do we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected ; hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked. If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with

another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit by which we come into communion with him and with the Father, which binds the Head and the members together.

They that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die : but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God, and cry by the spirit of adoption ; Abba, Father : The same Spirit helpeth our infirmities, and beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God : and if children, then heirs ; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may also be

glorified together. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. So it is with the communion of the Holy Spirit. By this Spirit the bond between men, and Jesus, and God, is inseparable and forever knit together. For this reason are those who are Christians in name and deed, in spirit and in truth, called saints. For this reason is the union of Christians by this Spirit called a communion of saints.

Behold, my beloved ! the washing in water at baptism, and baptism in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, all tell us, that Christ so loved the church that he gave himself for it, and that he sanctified it, and that this, his chosen, his beloved, should stand before him in glorious, lovely beauty, without spot or blemish, free from all that is hateful and makes hateful, disfigures and defiles, holy and blameless ; united with him in innocence and pure love. Christ gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify

unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. This is what is declared to our hearts by baptism. He who has not the solemn will and purpose to become continually purer and better does not really understand what that means, 'Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it!' He comprehends it not, and knows not how to estimate how dearly Jesus has purchased his own peculiar people! His heart feels nothing of the love of Jesus, and takes no interest in his sufferings and death for us. He shows that he does not yet belong to Christ's peculiar people, to his church. No, he is not yet a Christian, though he may have been baptized unto Christ by the baptism of Christians.

He to whom has appeared this saving grace of God, which is and shall be offered to all, he to whom it has actually appeared, who acknowledges it as saving grace, and as such has accepted, embraced, and made it his own, will according to its nature, be infallibly chastened by it, and powerfully excited to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.

And when this grace thus manifests itself powerfully and actively in the heart and life, when it awakens and kindles that in the heart, and thereto animates and incites it, then the man belongs to the elect, the saints, the beloved of God ; then is he by Jesus presented holy, and unblameable, and unproveable in the sight of God. Those whom he did predestinate, them he also called ; and whom he called, them he also justified ; and whom he justified, them he also glorified. That man has in the Spirit the pledge and witness of the paternal love of God and the fraternal love of Jesus. And whoever he may be, and wherever he may live, and however he may fare, he is and remains a member of the body of which Christ is the Head : he is a fellow-member of the one, universal, Christian church, which is limited to no seasons, to no peculiar men, to no particular places, to no religious societies or parties, to no places of assembly or forms of external worship ; which is fettered to nothing outward, visible, earthly, perishable and mutable ; which has its aim not on earth, but in heaven ;—he has come to the first-born, which are written in heaven !

Children, the first thing that befel you in your lives, relating to Jesus and the welfare of your souls, was, that your parents presented you for that baptism which Jesus instituted. They desired to give you up to Christ; to him who, while he lived on earth, so loved children: to whom parents then brought their children, that he might bless them; and who received them with kindness and tenderness, took them in his arms, pressed them to his heart, and gave them back to their parents with his blessing;—to him they were not too little and insignificant for the blessings of his love. He understood and appreciated the motive of those who brought them. He gave them not a word of censure or reproof. But the adults, who felt not at heart like those parents, who saw not in parents or children what he valued above all things else: his disciples who cherished thoughts, and desires, and hopes, and expectations, which were contrary to his mind and heart, and who cared not for the childlike spirit, and childlike mind, and childlike heart, — them he suddenly reproved for their feelings and conduct. To them he

said : Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not : for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily, I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein. On one occasion, when his disciples manifested vain, earthly minds, and strivings after great things of a worldly nature, he called up one of the children who loved to be about him and with him, to be a lesson and example to them. He set the little child in the midst of them, and said : Verily, I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

O listen, then ! Let it be deeply impressed upon your hearts, how dear to him were

children; how he received them and would have them received; how he blessed them, and how much he is concerned when no one brings them to him for his blessing. Let it be deeply impressed upon your hearts, how much a child's disposition, a child's heart, a child's innocence is prized by him; how he requires and thinks it necessary, that all who would be happy in his kingdom shall be children in modesty and comeliness, in freedom from arrogance and pride and self-exaltation, in frankness and rectitude and desire to learn, in tractability and obedience, in silent attention to, easy reception and right apprehension and pursuit of the truth, in faith and dependence on the word of the Father, in compliance with the will and desire of the Father, in confidence and trust in the love of the Father and the expression of his love, in calm reliance, quite free from vexation, and from painful, tormenting care, in inward attachment, love and peace. After these declarations of Jesus, you may imagine to yourselves with what an eye he looks down upon parents and children, when parents bring their children to his bap-

tism ; — with what an eye he looked down upon you, when you were so brought to him. To whom could your parents have given you up and confided you better than to him ? By whom can you be better counselled than by him ? For him you must be educated ! — was the silent declaration of your parents, when they brought you for baptism, that he might accept and bless you with all his blessings ; that you might through him be children of God, through him be purified, hallowed, and blest. How naturally was this wish of your parents expressed by the presentation for baptism !

At that time you knew not him to whom you were to belong. You could not then understand what was ensured to you in his name, and what was promised to him in your name. When you grew up, and the capacities and powers of your soul had so far developed themselves, that you could learn and comprehend something about him, then your parents remembered the engagement which they, (or in their place the witnesses of the baptism, your sponsors,) had made. You were made

acquainted with Jesus by narrative and instruction from the Holy Scripture. You have learnt what you may have in Jesus, and shall have with him and by him, if you wish it as he and God wish it; and you have also learnt what he and God wish from you. You have made a public confession before the church which you wished to join of what is most important and essential in Christian faith, Christian duties, and Christian hopes. Therein you must be solemnly confirmed, that is to say, established. What others undertook and promised in your name at your baptism, must be confirmed and ratified by yourself. Do you, then, with cordial faith receive as true and certain what you have learnt as God's word, and confessed with your mouth?

Is it also your earnest desire and steadfast resolve before God, to strive with all the powers which God has given, and will give still further to the faithful, in order that you may think and act as disciples and followers of Jesus ought to think and act?

And will you, then, as members of the church into which you will be received so con-

duct, according to its regulations and ordinances, that you may be found therein as members of a church of which Jesus is the Head?

Answer in the presence of God, and of the Lord of the church! The Lord is witness to your 'Yes;' he hears it; he sees in every one whose mouth utters it, the heart from which it came. He, before whom the heart is taken into account, and gives to every external act and life its value, he will also be witness in every moment of your future life whether you keep your engagement to him. Ah, dear and darling children! however faithful to him your hearts may intend to be, there will many things occur which will render the exact keeping of your word very difficult. You will too soon find, that that 'Yes' was easily said, but that it was a very important and comprehensive 'Yes.' You will find, alas! that not every one who is called a Christian cleaves to Christ; that not every one who outwardly adheres to a Christian church inwardly depends upon Christ.

You will not fail, among the men in the midst of whom you must be scattered, and

with whom you must live, often to see and hear, experience and witness, what can and will turn you away from him to whom you have been guided, and make you faithless and false to him to whom you solemnly promised to be obedient and to remain true. With all your forecast and watchfulness you will not succeed in our day, at all times and places, in avoiding those who without reserve will dishonour what your heart really honors, and on which it bestows its highest veneration ; who will shamelessly desecrate what to you is truly sacred, and must remain so forevermore ; who may and will rob you, by word, and deed, and example, of what you ought to value more than your life, because it is to be your life forever and forever. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul ? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul ? Never, never let it depart from your mind and heart, that the Lord of the church was the witness of your vow, and will be witness of the manner in which you fulfil it, and of the motive with which you may fulfil it ; that he saw into your heart, and

will see into it at all times and places, lest the sanctuary of your heart and your priceless pearl should be left a prey to those who will trample it under foot, and will poorly reward you for leaving it to be their prey. Keep your heart near to the Lord through the Bible which testifies of him, and through the book of nature in which you live, and of which he is also Lord. Assemble often, away from the distractions of life, in tranquil devotion under his eye. Let it be your aim to grow in all points like him who is the Head, whenever you read of him, and whenever you go where his worshippers assemble for his praise. He is nearer to you, and you are nearer to him, by every festival which is consecrated to him, by every supper which is consecrated to the remembrance of the highest proof of his love for you. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom ; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord ; not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is : and above all things, keep your eye

and heart fixed upon him by daily prayer. O! if you rightly lay to heart the 'one thing needful,' if you would be and do what, according to your promise, you ought to be and to do, you will have to commence daily prayer, if you have not done it already.

You will sometimes fail; even with the best intentions, with the most ardent strivings of the soul, the flesh will be weak; and every failure will be the more painful to you, every advantage which the weak flesh gains over the stronger spirit will be more distressing to you, the more sincerely you mean to be good; but courage, and faith, and hope will not on that account be stolen from you. Pray, then, fervently and importunately! Watch more carefully! Trust not too confidently to be kept from falling by your own strength! Resist more resolutely! Contend more earnestly! Persevere in watching, and fighting, and prayer! Hold firm in faith to your Lord! and then you will learn from experience, that he sees you, that he sees into your heart, that he understands every longing and aspiration of your heart, that he knows every want of your soul, and perceives every supplication, that he

hears and answers, that he is able and willing to help. Yes, only let your delight be in the Lord, and he will give you the desire of your heart. If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God ; and whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. Let it thereupon be your consolation that you have a good conscience, and study to lead a good life. Above all things look too it, that no man seduce you, and deprive you of this consolation.

And is this the meaning of your ‘ Yes ? ’ — then hail to you as new members of Christ’s church ! Yes, then are you members of his church in deed and in truth ; incorporated as members of that body of which he is the Head ; and in possession of all that, which he offered and ensured to you in baptism. Yes, it does not yet appear what you shall be and shall have ; still what is to be hoped for hereafter is as sure to you, as if you had already received it. He confirms and ratifies to you his promise in baptism, and he will confirm and establish you in your faith, confirm and strengthen you to the purification of your heart and life,

confirm and corroborate your hope. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering ; for he is faithful that promised. How faithful he is to the faithful, what he will be and will give to his faithful ones, is particularly testified and assured to you by that supper, which you will celebrate with the members of his church in commemoration of his death. It explains and assures what it is that you wish to be to him who is your Lord ; and in the supper he too explains and assures what it is that he will be to you. You wish to give yourself up entirely to him, and he wishes to give himself up entirely to you. This you say to him ! this he says to you by the supper ! Behold, how well he knows man, and the wants of man ! He knows what he needs who is hungering and thirsting after righteousness, after conformity to him, after communion with him and the Father ; and he will give to every one who turns to him that which he needs in order to be nourished and strengthened, revived and refreshed. So he promised : and every supper confirms the promise of his mouth.

THE LOVE OF JESUS.

PART SECOND.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

1 CORINTHIANS 11 : 23—29.

For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you ; That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread ; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat ; this is my body, which is broken for you ; this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood ; this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

Behold, here is full instruction upon what is

most essential and important to be considered in this holy act, in which we are all unitedly to participate to-morrow, and for which we wish to prepare ourselves more fully to-day. Who instituted this repast, which we call the Lord's supper; when it was instituted, and observed for the first time; how it was observed, and how and for what reason it was to continue to be observed through all coming time; what it had for its signification and object; what the spirit and heart is at that time to be fixed upon; what should then be the state of the mind and heart, and how they are to be prepared for it, so as not to be made sinful and punishable by participation in the repast, — all this is comprised in the instruction upon the holy supper which the apostle gave to the christian church in the city of Corinth. In this important and splendid city of Greece there was an important church. But alas! even at that time, it had come to such a pass in a christian Church, that in the very holiest assemblies of Christians it often occurred, that indeed it could not be seen that they who were together were Christians; and still less could

it have been thought that they had come together in order to worship Christ, their Lord, with the deepest veneration, and to commemorate him with the pledges of his highest love, with the emblems of the blessings and benefits of his death, with sorrowing, heart-felt love, and with tender, fervent gratitude.

Christians in those times often assembled for certain mutual festivals, which they were accustomed to conclude with the breaking of bread, and drinking the cup of thanksgiving, according to the will and command of their Lord. Jesus at the feast of the Passover had instituted this memorial of his death. His first disciples wished to manage every thing as exactly as possible according to their Lord's institution ; and who does not respect and highly estimate their intention ? Hence arose those social repasts which they called love-feasts. A beautiful, appropriate name ! if only it had always retained the reality with the name. But alas ! if we notice in this eleventh chapter of Corinthians what it was that induced the apostle to repeat this instruction upon the holy supper, so circumstantially and in writing, to a

Christian church, we see that the Corinthian Christians in regard to their love-feasts fell into much the same state as Christians of the present day with regard to many sacred things ; yes, even as it is with the very name of Christian. The name only was there ; and what the name expressed and betokened was wanting, while the very opposite was there. Love-feast ! Yes, justly might those repasts be so styled at which Christians sat together as such, and with which they connected the commemorative observance of the death of Jesus. Jesus was love itself ; out of love, and love alone, he died. Love, uniting love, should be the badge of his disciples and worshippers ; and love is naturally stirred up in every heart which is penetrated with the love of him who died on the cross from love. - In cordial brotherly love they sat together, when they ate and drank in remembrance of their first-born brother, who had gone away to his Father and their Father ; and the delightful fruits and beneficent expressions of love could not easily have been wanting there. Ah ! it must have been a stirring and salutary sight to see those first Christians,

who full of ardent love yet hung upon their Lord, affectionately seated together at such a repast. The provisions were sent by the members of the church. The poor, who could contribute nothing, fared just as well originally as the rich or great. The wealthier brother imparted his superfluity to the poorer brother. The poor brother could not suffer want, so long as the richer brother had a superfluity. There was then no outward distinction. All were one; all equal; a circle of brothers and sisters. Love unites and makes equal. And so it ought to have been, and so it should have continued to be; but now at Corinth the rich man had his expensive food brought for himself, and then ate by himself, unconcerned about the others. The poor were not remembered; and what was yet worse, they went and assembled there together without considering on what particular account they did so, and in what respect this repast which they celebrated must be distinguished from every other. They went to it thoughtlessly, as a banquet of sensuality. They actually brought an offering to sensuality. They sought to please the

flesh. And it may be imagined in what frame of mind, in what temper of heart, the Lord's Supper was celebrated after repasts so held. The rich were overladen with meat and drink, and thus unfitted for fine spiritual enjoyment, for tender religious emotion, and incapable of devotion or edification. The poor were hungry, many of them mortified and afflicted, or vexed and embittered by cold neglect or contemptuous disdain. At a festival which, according to its name and substance, its nature and intention, should have brought hearts nearer together, there was frozen division of hearts, and cold estrangement of minds. Yes, it was as mildly and forbearingly expressed as possible, when the apostle said to them with perfect truth, 'I praise you not, that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse.' It was not the fault of the festival certainly, that they became worse rather than better at every meeting. If every thing had been and continued with them as it should have been and continued, they would certainly always have come together for the better. And it was really a lamentable truth — 'When ye come together into one

place, this is not to *eat the Lord's Supper.*' And in order to represent this to them yet more clearly, in order to make yet more striking the scandalous, profane abuse of a custom so holy, he leads them by a simple relation of the institution of the supper to a knowledge of its true value, and makes them sensible in its full weight of what is meant and expressed by that, — 'eat the Lord's Supper;' and it is necessary that Christians in this country should learn it too. If the Corinthian abuses do not take place in our day, when the supper is no longer celebrated according to the ancient mode, still Christians of our times too often, alas! have occasion to say, 'When ye come together into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's Supper.' And that this instruction of the apostle is not less important and sacred to us than to the Corinthians, appears at once from the solemn beginning.

I have received from the Lord, that which also I delivered unto you. The apostle alludes to the information which he had imparted to them upon the supper of the Lord.

What I have imparted to you thereupon, he would say, well merited to be better considered and followed. It did not originate in my head, it was not an affair of my invention or interpretation, nor did I derive it from the assertions or reports of others, nor from written or verbal information. 'I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you.' Hence if others teach anything different respecting it from what I have done, and if they so teach that the consequence of their doctrine is the desecration and disparagement of the holy supper, you ought not in justice to confide in them. It is true, I was not a witness of it any more than they, when our Lord on that last evening before his death instituted this memorial of his love ; but it is as well as if I had been there present, and had heard all from his own mouth. From him was that which I delivered unto you, and which I must now repeat, because you have forgotten it, or because it does not seem to be of so much consequence to you as it should be. I give you again, therefore, what I myself received. Let it avail then with us, the same as if the

Lord himself had said it. The words of the apostle must be as sacred to us as the words of the Lord himself.

First of all he is mentioned, toward whom our whole soul should be directed in the supper. The Lord Jesus was the founder. He is the chief object and aim of this action. He, the Lord, there sat at the table, on which stood the bread and wine. Disciples, worshippers and servants of this Lord, men who had learnt of him, who were well known and confided in by him, who adhered to him, followed him, and obeyed him, were the company at the table. To all these he was Lord. But one there was against him.

Thus for the first time, he with his friends, held that festival which thenceforward should be celebrated to his memory. Yes, to him, to Jesus you draw near ! To him you draw near as to your Lord, when you come to his supper. You profess yourself his worshipper and servant, you declare him to be your Lord by partaking in this repast. This repast is for Christians alone ; by Christians has it been

held from the beginning. But there are many things in Jesus the Lord, on which you might fix the eye and heart, and of which you might gladly and gratefully remind yourself, if the evening meal in general should be a meal for commemorating Jesus, your Lord. The time on which this repast was first held by him with his friends calls your attention to that point which should here be more important to you than all others. It was on the evening of the last day before his death,—on that night when he was betrayed to his enemies, who had desired and determined his death; and ah! by one of his confidential friends, who had eaten bread with him, and now also partook in this most confidential repast. There sat he once more, all love, in the midst of his beloved. He knew that it was the last time; he knew the terrors that so nearly awaited him. But love here too forgot itself in the welfare of others. To them who lay so near his soul, to them with whom he ate and drank for the last time before his death,—to them he wished to leave this festival a delightful, and salutary memorial of his love. Ah! full of wisdom

and grace, he averted his glance from the terror, and dismay, and violence of his death, and turned it toward the joyful effects of his death, effects so desirable, so salutary, and so adapted to the wants of men.

The paschal lamb was eaten. The festival was held which reminded the Israelites to be grateful for a deliverance wrought by God, from great misery and public danger. You know how that in the last night, which ended the sufferings of God's chosen Israel in Egypt, all were spared and preserved, who distinguished themselves by the blood of the slaughtered lamb, as sundered from the multitude of those who would know and hear nothing of God, and would not submit themselves to his will, and so brought upon themselves destruction and death. On this account that supper of a lamb was called passover,—the feast of exemption or salvation. This confidential meal which Jesus made to succeed that earlier one, and which we still call supper or evening-meal, because it was held at evening, at the coming of night, should remind his grateful followers of a salvation planned by

God, and wrought through Jesus, of a salvation from far greater misery, and from the danger of losing a far higher and better life. This new festival was meant as the sign and seal of a new covenant between God and man, which was to be far more important than that earlier covenant between God and Israel, which was abolished in this.

Jesus had usually spoken of his kingdom under emblems or parables, which brought to mind enjoyment and pleasure. We are all acquainted with the parable of the great festive repast to which a wealthy householder gave out invitations ; of the sumptuous marriage-feast which a king prepared for his son ; of the bride-groom who was expected to the nuptial banquet. And here also by a festival, he reminds his worshippers of enjoyment and pleasure in his kingdom ; and he connects with a festival, the remembrance of the highest proof of love, of a proof which he alone could give. From what stood before them on the table for enjoyment, nourishment and refreshment, he took what he consecrated as

symbols and pledges of the life and blessedness which those who should adhere to him, would surely attain to through his death.

He took in his hand the unleavened cake ; raised his eyes and heart to the Father in heaven, and thanked him for his gift, the bread ; and gave to each one a portion of it, with the words : This is my body, which is broken for you ; eat this in remembrance of me. In like manner, after the eating, he took the cup, which, filled with red wine, the father of the family, after the eating of the paschal lamb, passed around the circle with joyful thanksgiving ; whereupon the feast was concluded with joyful songs of praise.* Giving thanks, he gave the cup, that they all might drink of it. This cup, said he at the time, is the New Testament in my blood. Drink ye of it, and as oft as ye so drink it, do it in remembrance of me.

Thus we learn clearly enough, what should

* The songs of praise and thanksgiving which were sung by the Jews at this high festival, were Psalms cxiii, cxiv, cxv, cxvi, cxvii, cxviii.

distinguish this festival, and what ought to be contemplated in it ; the death of Jesus ought to be placed before the eyes of those who partake of it. So he says who instituted it : Behold, I break this bread, and give it you ; take ye it, and eat it. The bread must be given away ; it does not, and cannot remain just as it is, if it is to give nourishment, strength, and power. So will this my body be given up, broken, and destroyed by death, so that it may be a sacrifice for you. Behold, this wine is poured out and given away. Take and drink ; it does not and cannot remain just as it is, if it is to cheer, animate, refresh and revive. So will my blood be shed through the sacrifice of my body, whereby the new covenant is perfected, in which you, who come to God through me, shall be free from that, from which the covenant of law could not make men free ; and in which you shall come into possession of all those things to which men, as sinners, could make no claim. My blood shall ratify and seal the covenant of grace and life, in which every thing shall be restored and replaced which sin has taken away, and

corrupted and destroyed. Let this be certain and present with you, as often as you thus eat and drink in remembrance of me.

Thus, then, we see in the holy supper with infallible clearness, what shall be effected, prepared, made certain and granted through the death and sacrifice of Jesus, for those who will cleave to him. Bread is my body, said he, which is given for you. Wine is my blood which is shed for the forgiveness of sins. We all know that bread is the most common and indispensable sustenance of men. Wine is generally known as a means of strengthening, animating and reviving. Hence Jesus, who could never misapply or mistake a word, called his body bread, and his blood wine. Should his sacrifice on the cross be something of that kind for men, it is impossible to doubt, that they shall thereby receive something which nourishes, and strengthens, and supports, which cheers, and quickens, and revives, which serves for the sustenance, and activity, and well-being of the outward man, and the earthly life.

Now when the disciples of Jesus, according

to the will and example of their teacher, strove to be what they should be, and observed, in this and that point, that they had not attained to what they would ; that they oftentimes became and did the very opposite of what they ought to be and to do ; that they stumbled and fell ; when their sad and tearful eyes looked at offences of which they had incurred the guilt ; when the actual, or apparent, evil consequences of these offences stood in clear light before the afflicted soul ; or when they felt intolerable coldness and deadness in their whole being ; or when they were oppressed, troubled, weary, and heavy laden ; when their inmost soul hungered and thirsted after life and nourishment from above ; did they then do too much, when they made use of the supper as a means of strengthening, animating and reviving ; aye, when they confidently expected by means of this supper all that was indispensable to them, as bread is to the hungry, and a refreshing and enlivening draught to the thirsty ? No ; if through the death of Jesus man were not to have something which is to the wants of his nature what genuine, invigorating bread is to

the hungry, and refreshing, cheering wine, is to the thirsty, then Jesus would not have made bread and wine the memorials and emblems of his death. As certainly as you appease your hunger, and find yourself nourished and strengthened by the food which you take, though you can neither know, nor conceive how, and in what way this food nourishes, strengthens, and supports us; as certainly as you quench your thirst, and feel yourself revived by a fresh and refreshing draught, though you are unable to comprehend how it comes to pass that we are so revived by it; so certain it is, that, through the death of Jesus, that which you seek in him will be for your strengthening and reviving, however this strengthening and reviving may be brought about, and however it may be connected with his death. Behold, this is said and sealed by the bread and wine, in the supper.

The supper likewise says, and assures, that Jesus makes it difficult for no one to partake in the blessings of his love, and the benefits of his death. Simple as are the means of strengthening and reviving which he employs

as emblems of his body, so simple and natural is also the mode of partaking, and receiving. Those who knew not whither they must go, if they would hear the words of eternal life, were there assembled around him ; they saw what he offered ; they heard what he said ; and they reached out their hands to meet his ; they took what he gave them, they ate and drank. Here too, as in baptism, that which is offered is inexpressibly important, and necessary, and salutary ; and nothing easier than the mode of reception, the condition of partaking. These gifts were nowhere to be purchased at any price. Behold, the only purchaser of these gifts, who has purchased them at the dearest price, who freely offers them ! Whoever would have it, has but to go to him, and receive from him, what he offers.

But indeed it naturally depends on that *desire* to have. Think you not, that Jesus well knew and considered that just such a memorial of his love and foresight would be right welcome and desirable to his disciples ? that just such a bequeathed pledge of love, especially when their eyes saw him no more on

earth, would be truly dear and precious to them, and exactly accord with the wants of their hearts? Think you not, that they eagerly reached forth their hands when Jesus presented the bread and wine, and at the same time spake such significant words? And think you not, that their hearts full oft impelled them so to break bread, and drink wine, in remembrance of the Lord, who had become so indispensable to them, and whose nearness and presence they afterwards full often missed? Ah, yes! surely this festival was precisely calculated for the wants and wishes which were now excited, or which, sooner or later, would certainly be excited in them. Without some such want, such a feast had been nothing, and would be nothing to them, however glorious and precious the things that might be thereby betokened and sealed. And to whom could it avail, without any knowledge and feeling that such a being was needful for him, as he who became on the cross, a sacrifice for men? or without any hunger and thirst after something so nourishing, strengthening, and enlivening as was offered and assured by the bread and wine

in the supper? Do they lay out the table for those that are filled? Do they invite him to it who has no desire to eat? Do they give bread to the satiated, who would enjoy something further in his satiety, in order yet more to tickle his palate, and gratify his sensuality? Does he who is not hungry, who is satiated, and over satiated, desire plain bread? and will in such case, its whole value be acknowledged, and will it be so esteemed and prized as God's gift, as by him who suffers want, and is hungry? No; only he who is faint and feeble, who has a consuming thirst, and languishes for refreshment, knows how to understand and estimate what a precious restorative is the wine; to him would a cup filled with wine, if he met with it, be indeed a cup of thanksgiving. He who has an aversion to wine, or who has lost all taste for such a generous, simple beverage, what will he do with wine? He will keep to his favorite drink in which he finds what he seeks, even if the wine has the decided preference, and even if his artificial, mingled, sweet, perishing drink is opposed to every unperverted taste, and also

stupifies, weakens, injures, and slowly destroys him, instead of refreshing, quickening, strengthening, and reviving him. He who suffers hunger and thirst knows what he has in the bread and wine, and what an office of love he performs who with spontaneous, and gratuitous goodness offers him both. He who suffers for want of that which is made ready and certain through the death of Jesus, and which ought to be devoted and sealed by the bread and wine in the supper, who acknowledges and feels this want in himself, and earnestly desires to be relieved, he only will come to Jesus, and will have and receive from him, and truly make him his own, who himself offered his flesh and blood ; and his wants shall be satisfied, as certainly as bread appeases hunger—and wine, the thirst. So says and assures the supper ; and then, indeed, will be known and appreciated what we have in a being like Jesus ; what unspeakably great love he manifested by the sacrifice of himself ; and what it is to receive all that we so pressingly need for true welfare and true life, in such an easy way !

Yes ; every one who thus comes to Jesus

Christ, in order to receive from him what he needs, and who thus seeks, will find what he seeks, be he who he may, whenever and wherever he may live on the earth. It was not to cease with that single repast, upon the night in which he was betrayed. He said, while he distributed the bread : This do in remembrance of me ; take bread and eat it thus, and think therein of me, when I am no longer visibly with you on the earth. And with the wine he said in like manner : This do ye, as oft as ye drink, in remembrance of me. And so too, they often did. They continued in fellowship and breaking of bread. They brake the bread here and there in private houses. It is so stated in the Acts of the Apostles of the first Christian church in Jerusalem ; and we should have expected it, even if it had not been stated.

If the beloved of your heart must be separated from you for a long time, or without any hope of again meeting on earth, and at his departure should give you his portrait, or ring of constancy, with the words : Think of me, when I am far away ; would you not often by

its means, bring that distant, invisible friend near to your heart and soul? And even if he had not spoken, would it require for that purpose an outward suggestion, an exhortation from others, or an injunction, while you bore him in your heart? Or if a loving friend who died as a victim of his love for you, had given you shortly before his death a pledge of his love, which should be to you a perfect expression of the mind and heart, with which he departed to a better world, would any narrative, any epistle, any dead letter, be able to present him so vividly to your soul, to restore him to your heart, as this pledge with the stamp of his heart upon it? Would not every moment be sacred to you, in which, withdrawn from the tumult of the world, you could employ yourself with him before this hallowed relic? Would not your heart in silence often thus prepare itself a feast? Would not tears of love, and gratitude, and earnest longing, often bedew the dear memorial of love? Yes; to him who has a heart in his bosom that is near and dear to Jesus, to him that is ever a favored, desired, and holy hour, when he with others,

can adhere to this Jesus, and do that which Jesus has commanded to be done in remembrance of him.

Where could there have been a Christian church without this sacrament? And it is not to be confined to those first disciples of Jesus, nor to those earlier Christian churches. To all Christians, in all the world, at all times should the Lord's Supper be a compensation for the loss of his personal presence. To all should it sensibly represent his love and his death—the blessings of his love, and the fruits of his death: for as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death 'till he come. Do you hear? 'Till he shall come again hereafter, so long will this feast be, and remain, an evidence and memorial that he once lived, and suffered, and died, on earth. From his death even to the end of days, will that love by which he died be testified and proclaimed by this feast. O dear, worthy, precious word for us, and for all, who live by faith, and not by sight; for all of us whose eyes saw him not in his grace and love, whose ear heard no word of life from his

mouth, who were not witnesses of any proof of his love. O, happy are we, if we have not seen him, and yet have loved ; if we believe in him, though we see him not ! Yes ; so commonly as bread and wine are known as means of nourishment, and strengthening, so commonly will his sacrifice of love be proclaimed as means of nourishing and strengthening, or enlivening and quickening. So too, will that be proclaimed and sealed by the sacrament, which he so commonly said : I am the bread of life ; he that cometh to me shall never hunger ; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever : and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life ; and I will raise him up at the last day. So too, in this last supper before his death, speaks the voice which cried in the last day, that great day of the feast. If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth in me, as the Scripture hath said, out

of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. So, also, resounds from this sacrament the call of love : Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. So likewise his supper makes intelligible and certain to us that word of his mouth : If a man love me, he will keep my words : and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. So, too, is his supper, 'yea and amen' to the promise : Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled ! and it is a seal to the assurance : I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

Yes ; Christian friend, only come with the right mind and heart to him, to your Lord, in this supper ; draw very near to him at his table ; place yourself very close to him, and get still closer, then is he also come near to you ; then is he as near to you as he was to his disciples on that evening, though your eye may not see him ; then he says to you by the bread and by the cup, the same as he there said, though your ear may not perceive the

voice of his mouth. Yes ; in faith and by faith, you have him who gave himself for you. His Spirit is in you ; you are his. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. So he says himself. The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ ? the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ ? So says one of his ambassadors. Yes ; his death is yours, as well as his life. He has died for you, though you were not born till above eighteen centuries after his death ; and he lives for you though you see and hear nothing of him ; and he will hereafter come again to your joy and blessedness, though he will so long delay the fulfilment of his promise. Of this his supper is to you a sign and seal, a witness and pledge. And so have all been further witnesses of him, who have received his gospel, from his ascension, through all centuries, even to this day ; and thus it has been a means of strengthening and comforting thousands of his worshippers scattered over the earth ; and thus it will continue to be observed till he come again, however the

world may change ; and though there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, where is the promise of his coming ? Still Jesus testifies by the supper to all his worshippers in every age : Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world !

After such instruction upon the holy supper, does any one inquire how and why the Christians in the Corinthian church, in their assemblies ate unworthily of the bread, and drank unworthily from the cup of the Lord ? They ate and drank unworthily, because they ate and drank without thought and veneration for Jesus, without reflection and interest in the heart, thankless and unfeeling, indifferent and inattentive, with fleshly minds and impure, perverted hearts, with neglect and contempt toward their Christian brothers and sisters. They ate and drank unworthily, because each thought only of himself, and cared not for others ; just as people in our times also do, who are accustomed to say, ‘ Each one for himself, and God for us all.’ They thought not

with sympathizing hearts of the poorer, humbler brother ; and they thought not with love and gratitude of him, on whom more than all the heart should then be fixed. They ate and drank unworthily, because they discerned not the Lord's body, because they did not consider and lay to heart the distinguishing and significant points of this repast, because in partaking of the bread it was not with them a vitally important consideration, 'The Lord offered up his body for me on the cross!' and in partaking of the wine, 'The Lord shed his blood for the forgiveness of my sins!' They ate and drank unworthily, because they even then supplied aid and nourishment to their fleshly lusts and impure desires, when the memory of Christ's crucifixion should have been newly and deeply impressed upon them. 'They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.' 'Ye are bought with a price ; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.' In short, they ate unworthily, because through this supper they were nothing bettered, but rather grew worse.

Thus by great sin they made themselves guilty of the body and blood of our Lord. They ate and drank damnation to themselves, because they discerned not the Lord's body. They were accomplices in regard to the body of the Lord, whose sacrifice was occasioned by the sins of men; and in regard to the blood of the Lord, which was shed for the deliverance of men from misery, and ruin, and death of sin. If men had not had such impure minds and depraved hearts, so vain and blinded, and so infatuated and contracted by fleshly lusts and desires, so alienated from the higher, invisible world, and fettered to the things of this lower world, and by perishable earthly pleasures, and blunted as to love for God and man,—if there had been no such men on the earth, if there had been no sin which deprives men of peace, and happiness, and true life, and plunges them into misery, and ruin, and death, then Jesus would not have needed thus to suffer and to die. The sins of men brought him to this death. He who takes no thought nor care as to the increasing of his guilt, shows that it is indifferent to him

whether Jesus had to suffer more or less, or whether he could have been wholly exempted from his sufferings and death ; and whoever, notwithstanding Christ's sacrifice on the cross, can so indulge his malignity as to become yet worse, would not find it difficult to coincide with that excess of malice, which brought Jesus to the cross. Such a man betrays an indifference, a hardness and insensibility of heart, like the indifference, the hardness and insensibility of those who cried, ' Crucify him ! ' No ; men who at the feast of love, at the commemorative celebration of the death of Jesus, betray such a state of mind, and so deceive themselves ; who know and consider not how miserable, and poor, and helpless they were without Jesus, and what it must have cost the Father in heaven, and what it has cost Jesus to snatch men from their misery and ruin ; do not feel and estimate in their hearts how dearly Jesus has bought them. They have no desire to become free from that, from which the death of Jesus should make them free ; they allowed themselves rather to be yet more blinded, infatuated and snared by

that which was so opposed to God, to Jesus ; and so were alienated still farther from God and Jesus, to whom they should have drawn nearer and nearer. They did not acknowledge and ponder the high value and unutterable greatness of the love of God and Jesus Christ, as manifested in the arrangement for the redemption of men. They felt nothing of the weight and burden of the sufferings, to which Jesus out of love subjected himself even to the death of the cross ; and hence they are not excited to love and gratitude to God and Jesus ; and feel no inclination, no impulse to live in love and gratitude to him who died for them. By insensibility and levity, by a fleshly mind, and by sin, the unfailing fruit of such a mind, they made themselves guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. Had they had any lively knowledge of the sufferings and the death of Jesus, and of the objects and results of these sufferings and this death, had they had but human compassion for what Jesus must have suffered, it would have been impossible for them to assemble in such evil guise for the celebration of a feast which was

wholly designed to fill the heart with lively inward abhorrence of all that is sin and iniquity. They increased and aggravated their guilt by their observance of the sacrament ; and so ate and drank to their own condemnation and punishment. What might and ought to have been made a most salutary blessing for the heart and life, became, and by their guilt became, a malediction and a curse. And ah ! the wretched fruit which sin infallibly brings forth, when lust hath conceived, and when sin, its offspring is finished, was not wanting there ; as is clearly intimated in the first chapter of James and fifteenth verse.

Learn then, dear Christian friend, to be aware of and to avoid unworthy eating and drinking in the holy supper. If a living knowledge and inward feeling of your vileness and unworthiness before God and your Saviour, if a correct, genuine knowledge of your sin and your danger, if a deep, real feeling of your weakness and need of help, disturbs and distresses you, humbles and prostrates you before your God and Saviour, if from your very

heart you exclaim, 'O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from that which reigns in this body, and brings me misery, ruin and death!'—upright and genuine Christian, think not then, that you are unworthy to enjoy the holy supper, and give yourself no anxiety about it. No; if your inmost soul is in such a frame, if your mind is in such a state, if you are filled with that sorrow, which, because it works repentance unto salvation, is well pleasing to God,—that repentance which is not to be repented of—then hasten to the table of the Lord, that your faith may be strengthened, your spirit raised up and quickened, your soul calmed and comforted, your heart cheered and revived; such a contrite spirit is a sacrifice acceptable to God. To him whoever brings such a sacrifice in his breast to his Saviour's table, belongs that sacrifice which the Saviour made to God upon the cross. Such a broken and contrite heart God will not despise. O no; to you and to all men who have such a heart and mind, it is sensibly represented in the supper, brought into full view, deeply impressed upon the

heart, and made most evident and certain,—that Jesus Christ has died for the forgiveness of your sins ! Your heart then says to Jesus, as you approach his table, ‘ Be thou my Saviour, my Redeemer, my helper ; heal and revive my wounded and desponding heart ; calm the disturbance and terrors of an accusing conscience ; raise the prostrate and burthened soul ; help me to believe ; strengthen and animate me to that which is good ; come to the aid of my weakness and frailty ! ’ Then will he reply to you through that bread which, according to his pleasure and command, is to be given to you : ‘ This is my body which is broken for thee ! ’ He answers you through the cup which in his name will be presented to you : ‘ This is my blood which is shed for the remission of thy sins ! This wine is a pledge and seal to thee, that thou art a partner in the covenant of grace and life, which was sealed by my blood. Be comforted ! Depart in peace ! Sin no more ! Thy faith hath saved thee ! ’

But do you wish to appear at the Lord’s ta-

ble?—take care that you go not thither thankless and unfeeling, indifferent and light-minded, without reverence and reflection. You partake unworthily, if you do not consider what you ought particularly to intend by your going to the supper. You partake unworthily, if you do not thereby keep before your eyes and heart, that you there go to Jesus, your Lord, as his disciples; and that you there seek in Jesus, and shall there obtain from him, something as needful and indispensable to the immortal welfare and eternal life, as bread to the hungry and drink to the thirsty. You partake unworthily, if you do not ponder the greatness of the paternal love of God, who so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son,—gave him up to suffering and the death of the cross,—that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life;—if you do not reflect upon and lay to heart the inexpressible greatness of the brotherly love of Jesus, who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but left the heavens, where he might still have enjoyed himself in the glory of God; and took on him-

self the form of a servant, became BROTHER to the least and lowest, and despised the shame, and humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross ; and all this, not to gain any thing for himself, but to serve others, and to give his life for their salvation. You partake unworthily, if no thought nor feeling is excited in you, that you were bought at so great a price to be his own, without any works or merit of yours, from mere grace ; and if nothing of natural emotion, of the innate sensibility of the human heart, excites you to endeavor to live in gratitude and reciprocal love to him who gave his life, that nothing might prevent you from obtaining eternal life, and to glorify him in your body and in your spirit, to which he has acquired every right.

Furthermore, you partake unworthily, if you bear and cherish in you bitterness, envy, hatred, enmity, implacableness, revenge, contentiousness, avarice, selfishness, contempt, slander, falsehood and deceit, or any hard, unrighteous feeling, or any hostile, hateful disposition toward your fellow-men, and tame-

ly suffer yourself to be governed by them, instead of controlling them;—if any root of bitterness spring up in you, of which the fruit is unkindness and dissension between you and those whom you ought to love as yourself, not in word and tongue merely, but in deed and truth, so as to do unto others all that you would have them do unto you.

Behold, men join with you without external distinction at the same table of the one Lord, in the same bread, and the same cup; children of one Father, brethren and sisters of one Brother, disciples and servants of one Master, baptized with one baptism, confessors of one religion, branches of one vine, members of one body, united by one Spirit to one Head, called by one Gospel, and by one faith, to one Redeemer, to salvation from one misery and one death, to one hope of one life, to one blessedness in the mansions of one Father's house in one heaven. The bread that is broken in the sacrament is the communion of one body. The cup of thanksgiving is the communion of one blood. For we, being many, are *one* bread, and *one* body; for we

are all partakers of that *one* bread. It is from this *fellowship* that the supper is called *communion*; for this reason 'communion' means the same as 'going to the sacrament.'

You come thereto in order that the forgiveness of your sins, and the paternal love of God with all its blessings, may be sealed and confirmed to you: put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Consider why and wherefore you say to your heavenly Father in the Lord's prayer, 'Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors;—and consider what Jesus adds,—If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive

your trespasses. You would, at the sacrament, that God may have nothing against you :— then consider and follow also the word of Jesus :—If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way ; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer. The Lord's Supper is a feast of reconciliation ; and you partake of it unworthily, if it is not so between you and your neighbor. But you partake the most unworthily, if you not only do not consider and lay to heart what it is from which man should be redeemed and delivered by the death of Jesus, if your heart is not continually benefitted, your mind and life not sanctified more and more through every sacrament : but if you come to the supper for the purpose of purifying yourself at once from old defilement, so as to wallow afresh and more eagerly in the mire ;—if you follow after your fleshly lusts as before, and indeed more peacefully and securely than before, and seek only to give free course to your impure lusts and unbridled evil propensities ;—if that ungodly sentiment, which may be well called

a birth of hell, deceive you, that by the use of the holy sacrament, the old sin which had accumulated till then is acquitted, and done away, and a licence given for the commission of new sins. O shameful dishonoring of Jesus! Most presumptuous desecration of his death! Coarsest insensibility, most dreadful and deadly coldness of heart, most stupid indifference toward the sufferings and mortal agonies of Jesus! O most shameless, dangerous and ruinous self-deception! Shall we, who look to be justified through Christ, be ourselves found sinners? Is Christ then a servant of sinners? God forbid. What shall we say then? shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid! How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism unto death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.—Yes, be it far, far from thee, to approach the Lord's table with such sentiments and thoughts. God preserve

you, that you may never eat and drink so unworthily. You would make yourself guilty of the broken body and the shed blood of the innocent Lord. You eat and drink to your inevitable punishment. You sin wilfully ; and if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries. So says the same apostle in Heb. 10: 26, 27.

PART THIRD.

SELF-EXAMINATION.

THEREFORE let a man examine himself, and thus examined, and prepared by examination, he may eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. Let every one look to it, that he neither eat nor drink unworthily, and that he do not make himself guilty and liable to punishment, by partaking of the holy supper. Let every one inquire accordingly, how far and in what respect the sacrament may be a judgment or a blessing to him. But let a man exam-

ine himself, says the apostle. He, the apostle, does not make it his business to examine the hearts, to search the inmost souls, of the different members of the great church at Corinth. He does not take it upon him to decide upon the heart's frame, upon the state of the soul of each individual. How could he? If we would judge ourselves, he says in v. 31, we should not be judged, we should have no cause to fear the judgment of God. We ourselves must know, that if our hearts condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God; and whatsoever we ask, we receive of him. Every one should inquire into and search his own heart. Only by this self-examination and preparation, which each one should make his most sacred business, can that be promoted and attained, which ought on this occasion to be promoted and attained. The preacher, who with the members of his church that would draw near to the Lord's table, previously observes a preparation, as it is called, cannot investigate the state of the heart and the tenor of the life of every individual member. He cannot exactly and correctly investigate the prevailing emotions and

prevailing errors of each one, nor the darling propensities and habitual sins of each one, nor the grosser or the more refined excesses, the manifest or the concealed corruptions and abominations of heart of each one, nor the hidden springs and secret motives of the actions of each one, nor the faith or the unbelief, the scepticism or the superstition, the levity or the indifference, the warmth or coldness of heart, the love or the hatred, the strength or the weakness, the perseverance or the instability of each particular one. Consequently he cannot decide or determine, whether or how far each one may eat or drink worthily or unworthily ; or what he must do or avoid in order not to eat and drink unworthily. No ; the preacher can and will facilitate only this sincere and careful self-examination, and promote the accurate and real preparation of your heart. The teacher of a Christian church will do and can do no more than to attune and prepare the mind to self-examination ; to call the attention to that which you are mainly to contemplate and guard against in self-examination and preparation, so that you may not be blinded, and deluded, and

betrayed to your great injury by selfishness and darkness; to give hints and instructions whereby you may chiefly prove your ownself, if you are anxious not to partake unworthily; to direct the heart and soul to that which they should be fixed upon in the sacrament; to guide the mind and inclination, the course and conduct whither they should be guided by the supper. At this the psalm and sermon aim; this is the sum and substance of the questions which were propounded to you, and by you, in the presence of God and your Saviour, were confirmed by a 'Yes,' and sealed with 'Amen.' For this object, the reading of a good and edifying book, of an appropriate portion of Scripture, the reading of an excellent hymn, may be very serviceable. But think not, that by mere singing or prayer or reading, by attendance at church, by listening to preaching, by answering the test-questions, you have completely examined yourself.

You may well imagine to yourself, that if you were invited to the table of some mighty lord, you would certainly appear and behave in a suitable and decorous manner, because one of his servants had told you what was

most essential thereto ; or else, because he had solemnly asked you, whether you would observe and do every thing which a worthy guest is to observe and do,—and you had solemnly answered him in the affirmative : Examine yourselves, says this same Paul, whether ye be in the faith ; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates ? But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another : for every man shall bear his own burden. No ; not in another ; neither through the trial of your own heart and life, nor the heart and life of others, seek rejoicing for yourself. Measure and judge your purity and innocence, your faith and divine enjoyment, not according to what some may have, or others may want ; build not your virtue on the fragments of other men's virtue. You know who it was that said, ‘ God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are !’ —and you know also how Jesus regards such a disposition. No ; prove your ownself according to the will of Him with whom you have to do in the Sacrament. Let the busi-

ness of trying yourself be done, between him and you in silence and solitude ! Let his word, and your conscience enlightened, guided and refined by his word, decide upon your case !

And now you plainly see what there is to examine, wherein and whereupon you should examine yourself, whereto your eye and heart should be directed in this examination, and wherein all should end. It was from love that Jesus died on the cross for you ! This is indicated to you by the bread and wine in the Sacrament ; and upon this let all your preparation proceed. By silent meditation or by reading the history of his sufferings and his crucifixion, bring him as near as possible to your soul. Let him hover round you in all his innocence and patience. Let your heart feel as deeply as it can for his suffering heart—suffering from love, and for the anguish of his soul under all the dreadful abuses, and afflictions, and pains, and tortures, which he must suffer from men ; he, who came from heaven to earth to bless mankind ; he, who would then do the last—the utmost that love to man could do, who would devote himself entirely to the happiness of men. Place yourself in spirit at the last

meal of love, at which he instituted for you a memorial of his love ; as he also, in that prayer of love which the disciple of his heart has left on record for us, remembered you before his Father. Go with him in spirit from this repast to Gethsemane. Behold, how he who had spoken so calmly of his near approaching sufferings, and who had so resolutely pressed on to meet them, is there overwhelmed by the load of sorrow that lay upon him ; how distressed and timid he is ; how he throws himself on the ground, and seeks to calm his breaking heart by supplications to his Father ; how he writhes and wrestles, covered with the sweat of agony. Hark ! how he, from whose mouth no complaint had been heard in any sorrow, now complains aloud, ‘ My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death ! ’ Behold, how he who had often withdrawn from the society of his confidential friends, in order to console and strengthen himself in solitude by intercourse with his Father, is here impelled by disquietude and anguish to pour out his heart to others ; how he asks and entreats, that they also would watch and pray. Hark ! how he prays himself, and prays re-

peatedly, that his Father would yet cause this bitter cup to pass from him? Behold, how he needs strength from above, in order to be supported. Accompany him, the prisoner in bonds, to his trial. Behold the treatment he receives; their clamor, and his silence; their rage and madness, and his quiet and composure; hear how he is reviled and reviles not again; what lies and slanders they utter against him, and how briefly and excellently, at the proper place, he bears witness to the truth, and then no lie and no slander extorts from him one word of threatening displeasure or of vengeful wrath! See how is he mocked, despised, buffeted, spit upon, less esteemed even than a murderer, scourged, abandoned to the rude soldiery, who crown his head with thorns, and smite them in, who exhibit him to the people as a spectacle in pitiful and preposterous royal robes, and have the most malicious sport with him. And behold how he, who with a word could have dashed to earth the armed troop, endures it all, and when he suffers, threatens not, but commits himself to him that judgeth righteously. Follow him to the place of his death! see how

he totters, exhausted by vigils, and inward and outward pain ; how hard it is for him to carry the cross ; how they hang him between two malefactors, as if he were worse than either ; how the blood-thirstiness of his enemies is not slaked, when they had nailed him by the hands and feet to the cross ; how they reviled and mocked him ; and how he even then promised Paradise to one of those who was crucified with him, and who manifests a confidence in him even in his deepest abasement ; how considerate he is of the maintenance of his mother and his friend ; and how he forgives all the mockeries, and injuries, and reproaches of his enemies, with a prayer to his Father, that he would forgive them in their blindness ! Think what must have been the state of mind of him, to whom his God had been and might be so near, when he cried with a loud voice : My God ! why hast thou forsaken me ?' Put every thing together, which poured over him and his heart, from that last evening when he was troubled in spirit, and said : Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me ; he that eateth bread with me, hath lifted up his heel against me : till that moment on

the following noon-day, when he said : It is finished ! and full of peace and composure, with a loud and distinct voice, commended his spirit into the hands of his Father. And have you a human heart in your breast ? something then, will be stirred up therein, for him, the greatest, the most affectionate of sufferers. How can it be wholly otherwise, if you ever keep it in mind and heart : For me, even for me, did he thus suffer ! even for me did he thus give his body, and shed his blood !

And that you may know in all its greatness, and feel in all its worth, what grace the Father in heaven has manifested toward you in such a giving up of his Son ; what love Jesus has shown you by his sufferings and by such a death, remember why you stand in need of the mercy and grace of your God, and what it is that makes this plan of God for the pardon and redemption of men desirable for you. Look upon your sins, your impurity, your worthlessness, and criminality before your God ! Yes ; do it before him, the searcher of hearts, that you may not deceive yourself, and conceal nothing from yourself : and if you would see your heart and your life in their true form,

try them exactly according to the word and will of God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, and hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son and his apostles. Enlighten your heart and your life with the true light, that shall lighten every man. Hear what he, who is the Word, has said ; and test yourself thereby. Compare your mind and life with the mind and life of him who has left us an example, that we should follow his steps. He holds before you a mirror in his sermon on the mount, (Matth. 5: 6, 7,) in which you may see yourself in your true form : and many a word which his apostle, Paul, said to Christians at Rome, (Rom. 12: 13), and Galatia, (Gal. 5: 6); and Ephesus, (Eph. 4: 5, 6), and Colossé, (Col. 3: 4), if laid to heart, will certainly meet your case. Mark well how far you yet fail in goodness, and wherein you are imperfect. Observe what conscience accuses, and what the heart condemns. And if you really see, and strictly notice these things, then will it be a most precious saying to you, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners : then will this sacrament, by which he

would make it plain and certain that he came into the world to save you, be to you a dear and precious memorial of his love.

Thus, then, will this self-examination naturally lead to this result, that you need what bread gives to the hungry, and wine to the faint and thirsty,—strength, and quickening. Would you learn by this examination, whether faith in Jesus, your Saviour, and an interest in the blessings of his love and the love of the Father in heaven, have hitherto manifested themselves actually and fruitfully in your dispositions? Is it indeed evident by my life and conduct, that I believe from the heart, and know how to prize the truth, that I am bought with a price by Jesus, to be his own? Was it my real purpose, from love to him, and with grateful attachment of my heart to him, to do the good which he expects of me, and which I have often undertaken, and solemnly promised him, to do? Do I make it my business, for his sake, and from hearty devotedness to him, to renounce the evil which he would have removed from me, and which I have often sacredly abjured before his face? Do I mani-

fest pleasure and diligence in fulfilling the promises of my baptismal covenant, which I myself ratified at my confirmation, and renewed at the Lord's supper, with the same fidelity in which I desire him to fulfil his promises, he has given and confirmed to me? Is there any thing in me that urges and constrains me to live for him? Or do I still live agreeably to myself and my own will, to my flesh, with its affections and lusts? Do I find in myself an inclination and readiness to follow Jesus by denying myself, by sacrificing my darling propensities, by surrendering that which is dear to me, as soon as he requires the offering at my hand, or as soon as I know that he is displeased with that which is well-pleasing to me? Could I also determine, for his sake and with his temper of mind to suffer, to wait, to bear? Or do I prefer the things that are seen to the things that are unseen; the present, to the future, the changeable, to the unchangeable, the earthly, to the heavenly? Will Jesus then have owned me, as his disciple, and as having love to others? Does my Christian faith manifest itself as faith which worketh by love? Do I seek to do unto others as I would that others should do unto me? Or does selfishness still make

me hard, and loveless, and inimical to my neighbours? Do I always, and every where keep that precept in view : Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus? Are they questions of this nature, which you keep before you in your self-examination? How is it? Do you think that the answer thereto will so turn out, as to prove, that with the Christian mind and Christian life, it is easily and promptly done ! O, would you but so ask, so examine yourself ! Surely, the more you are in earnest with these questions, the more impartially you will answer them, the more justly and cautiously you investigate, so much the more vividly will you know, that there is something quite as needful for you, as is indicated by the sacramental bread and wine ; and so much the more intensely will you desire, that that something might become your own. And the more vividly you know, the more deeply you feel, how much you are in need of forgiveness and help, of strength and quickening ; the more fervently you desire to be enabled to obtain it, and to be sure of having it, so much the more dear and precious to you will be the proofs and pledges in the supper, of the love of your God

and Saviour ; so much the more heartily and gratefully will you appropriate to yourself what is thereby offered to you ; so much the greater grace and love will you see therein ; so much the more will it be meat and drink to your inmost soul ; and so much the more cordially and faithfully will you ever naturally live in love and gratitude to him, who has given himself for you. Thus celebrated, the Lord's supper will inevitably be a blessing to you ; and every sacrament so celebrated, a new and ever richer blessing.

Thus look upon Christ, and his love and his dying love ! Thus look on your heart and life, on your deficiencies and sins, on your infirmities and necessities. Thus compare how little you are, and how much you ought to have been, according to the will and good pleasure of him who hath so greatly loved you. Think how much is wanting in order to have and to maintain, peace with God, quiet of heart and conscience, comfort and confidence all your life long, and joyful, blessed hope, triumphant over death and the grave. Then will the celebration of the supper never become to you a cold and empty ceremony, an

indifferent custom, or a forced service. Your heart will understand what the heart of Jesus intended to give you in this custom, and why he instituted such a custom in remembrance of him. Not only in his death, which is there shown forth, but also in this supper itself, by which his death shall be shown forth, will your heart feel and praise his love. Ah! to one who has loved him, and yet has never seen or heard him; to one who hungers and thirsts after him, or after one word,—one gift from his loving heart, how unutterably dear must be such a bequest from his loving heart, such a visible, representing memorial, in which is sight and enjoyment! You come to his table then, filled surely with humility and reverence. He is your meditation. His love is the emotion of your heart. You receive what is given you according to his ordinance, with the same faith as if he himself offered it to you. Yes: he gives himself entirely to you, with all that he has and is. He is yours! And with exalted love, with strengthened gratitude, do you live to him, and through him to the Father; and for his sake, to men, to brothers and sisters of yourself and him.

THE SOUL'S AFFLICTION.

Let me not forsaken be,
 With grief to strive !
 Grant, in gloom, thy light to me,—
 My heart revive.

Low I lie before thy face !
 Faith comes and goes :
 Give me power, and give me grace,
 Nor shun my woes.

Follow thou my soul in need,
 And hear my cries :
 Ah, my pain is keen indeed,
 And courage dies.

Lord, assist me, and respond
 To my plaintive call ;
 Let my heart no more despond,—
 Be thou my All.

AFTER CONFIRMATION.

The sweet, the solemn hour is past!
 But echoes yet in memory:
 And ever may the lesson last,
 Then taught by hallowed rites to me.
 O may it be like living seed
 Deep-rooted in a mellow field;
 Which, fast as time its growth shall speed,
 Yet more and richer fruit shall yield.
 I now am Christ's!—and not alone
 By parent's wish, and baptism's seal,
 But by the solemn vows I own,
 By the free choice and faith I feel.
 Yes, thine, dear Lord! Be this my lot!
 To thee I am forever given;
 The grave and death divide us not,
 My heart from thee shall ne'er be riven.
 Thy word illumines the path I tread;
 It guides me like the star serene,
 Which erst the Magian sages led
 To where the Shepherd-lord was seen.
 My joyous soul no longer dreads
 The night of death, forlorn and drear;
 A paradise before me spreads,

And all above is bright and clear.
A God of love reigns far and wide,
All nature's broad dominions through ;
In his vast temple I abide,
And marks of love, admiring, view.
Far, far beyond my mortal ken,—
For that dark world—I trust thy word,
Which tells of glory there and then,
And bids my fears no more be heard.
There shall I to the flock belong,
Brought by thy hand to bowers of rest,
By living waters led along,
In pastures green, forever blest.
O take me, when at last the bond
Of life is sundered in the tomb,
And all that once I held so fond
Forsake me quite, or sink in gloom.
Ah, nothing but the faith I live,
And pledges of thy word to men,
In that dread hour can comfort give,—
Redeemer ! be my refuge then.
Thou orb of love ! upon me rise !
And mid the sun-light of thy brow,
Let that glad word my soul surprise,—
'Thy Lord's rejoicing, enter thou !'
Without this, what can life afford ?
Ah, fleeting moments—misspent hours—

Which worse than lost we must record,
When no such blessedness was ours.
O God, my Father, make me prone
To keep these vows inviolate :
My life, whole life, to thee alone,
To thee alone, I consecrate.
To this, but now, the seal was set ;
O day of sweet solemnity !
And never may my soul forget
What I, to-day, have sworn to thee.





